

neutral, for it had not observed impartiality toward belligerents, and had obeyed Napoleon's paper blockades established by the Berlin Decree a year before.

The new British orders threw the country into an uproar. Jefferson had called Congress to meet in special session, but he had no solution to propose for the troubles which beset the country. He dwelt on the necessity of preparations for coast defense, but was feeble and halting in his recommendations for a land force. His most ardent admirers could not but feel the inadequacy of every measure suggested.

Nothing was done for two months after the assembling of Congress, save to wait for some possible news from England of a favorable character. All hopes of an amicable adjustment of the trouble were swept away when, in December, England's Orders in Council reached the President. It was now thought that Jefferson must take a stand. He must give up his lifelong dream of peace and accept war. But neither Europe nor his own country knew the extraordinary tenacity with which Jefferson adhered to an idea. He now adopted the most extraordinary course ever devised to avoid war. With the aid of Madison he formulated a brief message to Congress recommending to it the advantages which might be expected from an inhibition of the departure of our vessels from the ports of the United States. Despite the vehement remonstrance of Gallatin, the one adviser for whose opinion he had profound respect, he sent the message with a packet of documents to both Houses. The

Senate at once went into secret session. Now ensued a process of legislation as extraordinary as was the purpose underlying it. In a few minutes a bill was drawn up embodying the President's wishes. The rule of three separate readings on three separate days was suspended. No debate was allowed. Within four hours a bill had been passed which laid an embargo for an indefinite period on all shipping within the ports of the United States. But the House was less subservient than the Senate. Though it went immediately into secret session, the passage of the bill was delayed three days. John Randolph, of Roanoke, leading the Quids and Federalists, eagerly welcomed